

## The Asymptotic Connectivity of Labelled Regular Graphs

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It is shown that almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs are  $r$ -connected, for any fixed  $r \geq 3$ . This is an instance of a more general result which applies to labelled locally restricted graphs whose points have degrees lying between  $r$  and  $R$ , where  $r$  and  $R$  are fixed,  $3 \leq r \leq R$ . The proof employs a known asymptotic formula for the numbers of these locally restricted graphs. It is also demonstrated that for fixed  $k > 0$  and  $r \geq 3$ , almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs with girth at least  $\lfloor k/(r-2) \rfloor$  are cyclically  $k$ -connected. This provides an asymptotic formula for the number of labelled cyclically  $k$ -connected  $r$ -regular graphs with  $p$  points, for fixed  $k$  and  $r$ .

### 1. INTRODUCTION

A  $k$ -point-cutset of a graph  $G$  is a set of  $k$  points whose removal from  $G$  leaves a disconnected graph. If  $G$  has at least  $k+1$  points and has no  $(k-1)$ -point-cutset, then  $G$  is  $k$ -connected. Also,  $G$  is  $r$ -regular if all its points have degree  $r$ . A 3-regular graph is *cubic*. Our main objective is to show that for any fixed  $r \geq 3$ , almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs are  $r$ -connected. This is not true for  $r=1$  or 2. Here, as in the rest of this paper, the statement that almost all labelled graphs with property  $X$  have property  $Y$  is interpreted as follows. Let  $X(p)$  denote the number of labelled graphs on  $p$  points with property  $X$ , and  $Y(p)$  the number of these which also have property  $Y$ . Then  $Y(p)/X(p)$  approaches 1 as  $p$  approaches infinity, where  $p$  takes only those values for which  $X(p)$  is non-zero.

The *partition* of a graph is the collection of degrees of its points. *Locally restricted* graphs are graphs with a given partition. In a labelled locally restricted graph, the degree of the point labelled  $i$  is not specified for any

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given  $i$ , but the total number of points with degree  $d$  is specified for all  $d$ . In Section 2, we consider locally restricted graphs whose degrees lie between  $r$  and  $R$ , where  $3 \leq r \leq R$ . Theorem 1 is essentially that almost all such graphs are  $r$ -connected. In other words, if for each possible partition  $D$  of a graph with degrees lying between  $r$  and  $R$  we define the probability  $\tau(D)$  that a graph with partition  $D$  is  $r$ -connected, then  $\tau(D)$  approaches 1 as  $p$  approaches infinity (irrespective of precisely which partitions  $D$  are considered). By putting  $r = R$ , we obtain our main objective, Corollary 1.1. By contrast, for  $r = 1$  and 2 it is observed that almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs are disconnected.

A graph  $G$  has *connectivity*  $k$  if it is  $k$ -connected but not  $(k + 1)$ -connected. It is immediate that all points of a  $k$ -connected graph have degrees at least  $k$ . Corollary 1.2 is essentially that for almost all labelled graphs  $G$  with degrees in the range  $3, \dots, R$ , the connectivity of  $G$  equals the minimum degree of a point in  $G$ . This resembles the well-known result of Erdős and Rényi [3] that if  $q(p) = \frac{1}{2}p \log p + \alpha p + o(p)$ ,  $\alpha$  a real constant, then almost all labelled graphs with  $p$  points and  $q(p)$  lines have this same property, of connectivity being equal to minimum degree.

A set  $S$  of lines (or points) of a graph  $G$  is *cycle-separating* if the removal from  $G$  of all lines (points) in  $S$  leaves a disconnected graph, at least two components of which contain cycles.  $G$  is *cyclically  $k$ -connected* (*cyclically  $k$ -point-connected*) if it has no cycle-separating set of  $j$  lines (points) for any  $j < k$ . In Section 3 we consider the numbers of labelled  $r$ -regular graphs which are cyclically  $k$ -connected or cyclically  $k$ -point-connected, and find that for  $r \geq 3$  these are asymptotically equal to the numbers of labelled  $r$ -regular graphs with girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$ , where  $\lceil \cdot \rceil$  denotes the ceiling function.

The proofs in the present paper rely on the following result of Bender and Canfield [1]. Let  $\rho(r, p)$  denote the number of labelled  $r$ -regular graphs on  $p$  points. Then as  $p$  approaches infinity with  $p$  even if  $r$  is odd,

$$\rho(r, p) \sim \frac{(rp)! \exp((1 - r^2)/4)}{(rp/2)! 2^{rp/2} (r!)^p}, \quad (1.1)$$

where  $r \geq 1$  is fixed. This is an instance of the following more general formula, for graphs with given partition, which is implied directly from the results in [1]. Suppose the non-negative integers  $p$ ,  $q$ ,  $R$ , and  $g(0), \dots, g(R)$  satisfy

$$p = \sum_{i=0}^R g(i) \quad \text{and} \quad 2q = \sum_{i=1}^R ig(i).$$

Then whatever the values of  $p$  and the  $g(i)$  subject to these conditions, the

number of labelled graphs with  $p$  points,  $q$  lines, and precisely  $g(i)$  points of degree  $i$  for  $0 \leq i \leq R$  is asymptotic to

$$\frac{(2q)! \exp(-\alpha - \alpha^2) p!}{q! 2^q \prod_{i=0}^R (g(i)! (i!)^{g(i)})} \quad (1.2)$$

as  $q$  approaches infinity with  $R$  fixed, where

$$\alpha = (4q)^{-1} \sum_{i=2}^R i(i-1) g(i).$$

Note that  $\alpha$  is bounded above by  $(R-1)/2$ .

The results of [7] relate to the asymptotic numbers of labelled regular graphs with given numbers of cycles of various lengths. In particular, for  $j \geq 4$ , the number of labelled  $r$ -regular graphs of girth at least  $j$  with  $p$  points, where  $p$  is even if  $r$  is odd, is asymptotic to

$$\rho(r, p) \exp \left( - \sum_{i=3}^{j-1} \frac{(r-1)^i}{2i} \right) \quad (1.3)$$

as  $p$  approaches infinity with  $r$  and  $j$  fixed.

We shall use  $B(n, r)$  to denote the binomial coefficient  $n!/((n-r)! r!)$ . Graph theoretic notation not defined here can be found in the book by Harary [4].

## 2. LOCALLY RESTRICTED GRAPHS

Our first aim is to prove a lemma which is used in establishing both Theorem 1 in this section and Theorem 2 in the next section. It is worthwhile to begin by contemplating the well-known fact that for all positive  $k$ , almost all labelled graphs are  $k$ -connected. One of the many ways to prove this is to argue along the following lines. Suppose  $G$  is a labelled graph on  $p$  points in which the points labelled  $1, \dots, k$  form a  $k$ -point-cutset. If we slice each of these  $k$  points in two,  $G$  is split into two graphs  $F$  and  $H$  with  $t$  and  $p-t+k$  points, respectively. The number of possibilities for the graphs  $F$  and  $H$ , when properly labelled, is at most  $2^{B(t,2)+B(p-t+k,2)}$ . But of the labels  $k+1, \dots, p$ , some are used in  $F$  and the rest in  $H$ , so we must multiply by  $B(p-k, t-k)$  to obtain an upper bound on the number of possibilities for  $G$ . It follows that the number of labelled graphs on  $p$  points which have some  $k$ -point-cutset is at most

$$\sum B(p, k) B(p-k, t-k) 2^{B(t,2)+B(p-t+k,2)},$$

where the sum is for  $k+1 \leq t \leq p-k-1$ . It can be shown that as  $p$  approaches infinity, this sum is negligible compared with the total number  $2^{B(p,2)}$  of labelled graphs on  $p$  points. Hence almost all labelled graphs are  $(k+1)$ -connected. Our proof of the forthcoming Theorem 1 can be viewed as an adaptation of this argument, to locally restricted graphs.

Unless otherwise specified, all summations and products are taken for  $i = 0, \dots, R$ . Suppose  $3 \leq r \leq R$ , and let  $D = (g(r), g(r+1), \dots, g(R))$  and  $g(i) = 0$  for  $i < r$ , with

$$p = \sum g(i). \quad (2.1)$$

Let  $L(D)$  denote the set of labelled graphs on  $p$  points with  $g(i)$  points of degree  $i$  for  $r \leq i \leq R$ , and hence no points with other degrees, and put  $v(D) = |L(D)|$ . Suppose  $G$  is a graph in  $L(D)$  in which the points  $1, 2, \dots, k$  form a  $k$ -point-cutset  $S$  for some  $k \geq 2$ . Let  $F'$  be a component of  $G - S$  such that the sum of the number of lines in  $F'$  and the number of lines joining  $F'$  to  $S$  is minimised, and define  $F$  to be the graph formed from  $G$  by retaining only those points in  $F'$  and  $S$ , and only those lines in  $F'$  or joining  $F'$  to  $S$ . In the following lemma, the notation  $O(\ )$  denotes a bound depending only on  $R$  and  $k$ , and not on  $r, p, m, n$  or the particular choice of  $D$  satisfying (2.1).

Let  $v(D, m, n)$  denote the number of possibilities for  $G$  in which  $F$  can have  $m$  points and  $n$  lines.

LEMMA. *The number  $v(D, m, n)$  is*

$$p^{m-n-k} v(D) O(1)$$

for  $n < 24(R+k)$ , and

$$p^{2-r-2k} v(D) O(1)$$

for  $n \geq 24(R+k)$ .

*Proof.* It can be assumed that  $L(D)$  is nonempty, so that

$$2q = \sum ig(i),$$

where  $G$  has  $q$  lines. It follows from the minimality of  $n$  that

$$n \leq q/2. \quad (2.2)$$

Let  $H$  be the graph formed by removing all points in  $F'$  from  $G$ . Each point or line of  $G$  is contained in either  $F$  or  $H$ , the only duplications being the points in  $S$ . As the points of  $G$  in  $S$  are labelled  $1, \dots, k$ , the labelling of  $G$

induces a labelling of the graph  $F \cup H$  using the labels  $1, \dots, p$  such that the points of  $S$  are labelled  $1, \dots, k$  in both  $F$  and  $H$ , no other labels being duplicated. We denote this improperly labelled version of  $F \cup H$  by  $G'$ . The number  $v(D, m, n)$  is just the number of possibilities for  $G'$ .

For  $0 \leq i \leq R$ , suppose  $s(i)$  ( $s'(i)$ ,  $s''(i)$ ) is the number of points in the set  $S$  which have degree  $i$  in  $G(F, H)$ . Also, suppose  $f(i)$  ( $h(i)$ ) is the number of points of  $F(H)$  which have degree  $i$ . Let  $\mu$  be the number of possibilities for  $G'$  under these conditions, so that  $\mu$  depends on  $D, m, n$  and the  $s(i)$ ,  $s'(i)$ ,  $s''(i)$ ,  $f(i)$  and  $h(i)$ . By (1.2), the number of labelled possibilities for  $F$  under these conditions is

$$\frac{(2n)! m! O(1)}{n! 2^n \prod ((i!)^{f(i)} f(i)!)}.$$

Moreover, there are potentially

$$\prod B(f(i), s'(i))$$

ways to choose the points of  $F$  which constitute the set  $S$ . Specifying that these points have the labels  $1, \dots, k$  divides the number of possibilities by  $B(m, k)$ . Hence, the number of labelled possibilities for  $F$  in which the points of  $S$  are labelled  $1, \dots, k$  is

$$\frac{(2n)!(m-k)! O(1)}{n! 2^n \prod ((i!)^{f(i)} (f(i) - s'(i))!)} \quad (2.3)$$

Similarly, the number of labelled possibilities for  $H$  in which the points of  $S$  are labelled  $1, \dots, k$  is

$$\frac{(2q-2n)!(p-m)! O(1)}{(q-n)! 2^{q-n} \prod ((i!)^{h(i)} (h(i) - s''(i))!)} \quad (2.4)$$

An expression for the number of possibilities for the graph  $G'$  is obtained by multiplying the product of (2.3) and (2.4) by  $B(p-k, m-k)$ . Hence,

$$\mu = \frac{(2n)!(2q-2n)!(m-k)!(p-m)! B(p-k, m-k) O(1)}{n!(q-n)! 2^q \prod ((i!)^{f(i)+h(i)} (f(i)-s'(i))! (h(i)-s''(i))!)}.$$

When (1.2) is used for an asymptotic estimate of  $v(D)$ , this becomes

$$\mu = \frac{O(1) v(D) B(q, n)}{p^k B(2q, 2n)} \prod \frac{g(i)!}{(f(i) - s'(i))! (h(i) - s''(i))!} \quad (2.5)$$

As

$$f(i) - s'(i) + h(i) - s''(i) = g(i) - s(i), \quad (2.6)$$

and  $\sum s(i) = k$ , it follows that

$$\prod \frac{g(i)!}{(f(i) - s'(i))!(h(i) - s''(i))!} \leq p^k \prod B(g(i), f(i) - s'(i)) \\ \leq p^k B(p, m - k),$$

where truth of the latter inequality also depends on  $\sum g(i) = p$  and

$$\sum (f(i) - s'(i)) = m - k.$$

Since  $r \geq 3$  we have  $q > p$ , so that (2.5) now becomes

$$\mu = v(D) B(q, n) B(2q, 2n)^{-1} B(q, m - k) O(1). \quad (2.7)$$

To obtain the total number of possibilities for the graph  $G'$ , one must sum the number  $\mu$  over all possibilities for the numbers  $s(i)$ ,  $s'(i)$ ,  $s''(i)$ ,  $f(i)$ ,  $h(i)$ , for  $0 \leq i \leq R$ . As  $F$  has  $m$  points, the number of possibilities for  $f(0), \dots, f(R)$  is at most  $m^{R+1}$ . There are  $O(1)$  possibilities for the  $s(i)$ ,  $s'(i)$  and  $s''(i)$ . When all these numbers have been chosen, the  $h(i)$  are determined by (2.6). Hence, by (2.7) together with the fact that  $v(D, m, n)$  is the number of possibilities for  $G'$ , we have

$$v(D, m, n) = m^{R+1} B(q, n) B(2q, 2n)^{-1} B(q, m - k) v(D) O(1). \quad (2.8)$$

Consider  $n < 24(R + k)$ . Then  $m$  and  $n$  are both  $O(1)$  and so (2.8) implies

$$v(D, m, n) = q^{m-n-1} v(D) O(1). \quad (2.9)$$

Now suppose  $n \geq 24(R + k)$ . The points of  $F$  which are not in  $S$  have degree at least  $r$ , so

$$m - k \leq 2n/r \leq 2n/3. \quad (2.10)$$

In view of (2.2), therefore,  $m - k$  can be replaced in (2.8) by  $\lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor$ . An application of Stirling's formula to (2.8) then yields

$$v(D, m, n) = m^{R+1} q^{1/2} n^{-1/2} (q - n)^{-1/2} B(q, n)^{-1} \\ \times B(q, \lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor) v(D) O(1). \quad (2.11)$$

Note that  $m \leq q$ , so that

$$m^{R+1} q^{1/2} n^{-1/2} (q - n)^{-1/2} \leq q^{R+2}.$$

Also it is readily verified that

$$B(q, n)^{-1} B(q, \lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor) \leq (n/(q - \lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor))^{n/3}.$$

Hence, (2.11) implies

$$v(D, m, n) = q^{R+2} (n/(q - \lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor))^{n/3} v(D) O(1). \quad (2.12)$$

For  $n < \sqrt{q}$ ,

$$(n/(q - \lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor))^{n/3} \leq (4/q)^{n/6} \leq q^{-n/12}$$

when  $q > 16$ , and so (2.12) implies

$$v(D, m, n) = q^{2-r-2k} v(D) O(1), \quad (2.13)$$

as  $n \geq 24(R+k)$  and  $r \leq R$ . On the other hand, for  $n \geq \sqrt{q}$ ,

$$(n/(q - \lfloor 2n/3 \rfloor))^{n/3} \leq (3/4)^{\sqrt{q}/3}$$

and so (2.12) implies (2.13) in this case also. The Lemma follows by (2.9) and (2.13) combined as  $q \geq p$  and  $2-r-2k$  is negative.

We are now ready to prove the main result of this section.

**THEOREM 1.** *The number of  $r$ -connected graphs in  $L(D)$  is  $v(D)(1 - O(p^{2-r}))$ , where  $O(\ )$  denotes a bound depending only on  $R$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $G$  be an element of  $L(D)$  rooted at an  $(r-1)$ -point-cutset  $S$ . If  $r$  is 3 and  $G$  has at least one component isomorphic to  $K_4$ , we specify that  $S$  consists of two points in one such component. The number of possibilities for  $G$  is then an upper bound on the number of elements of  $L(D)$  which are not  $r$ -connected.

Define a subgraph  $F$  of  $G$  as before. By the Lemma, the number of possibilities for  $G$  in which the points of  $S$  are labelled  $1, \dots, r-1$  and  $F$  has  $m$  points and  $n$  lines is

$$p^{m-n+1-r} v(D) O(1)$$

for  $n < 24(R+r-1)$ , and

$$p^{4-3r} v(D) O(1)$$

for  $n \geq 24(R+r-1)$ . To relax the condition on the labels of the points in  $S$ , we must multiply these numbers by  $B(p, r-1) = p^{r-1} O(1)$ . Hence, as the bound denoted by  $O(\ )$  in the Lemma is independent of  $m$  and  $n$ , the total number of possibilities for  $G$  is

$$v(D) O(1) \left( \sum p^{m-n} + \sum p^{3-2r} \right), \quad (2.14)$$

where the first summation is over all  $n < 24(R + r - 1)$  and all relevant values of  $m$  (that is, all  $m$  for which  $v(D, m, n)$  is non-zero), and the second summation is over all  $n \geq 24(R + r - 1)$  and all relevant  $m$ . There are clearly  $O(p^2)$  possible values of the ordered pair  $(m, n)$ . Since  $r \geq 3$ , it follows that the sum  $\sum p^{3-2r}$  in (2.14) is  $p^{2-r}O(1)$ . On the other hand, the sum  $\sum p^{m-n}$  contains  $O(1)$  terms, and it will shortly be shown that  $m - n \leq 2 - r$  whenever  $v(D, m, n)$  is non-zero. Hence, (2.14) is

$$p^{2-r}v(D)O(1),$$

from which the theorem follows.

It only remains to show  $m - n \leq 2 - r$ . Put  $m = r - 1 + t$ , so that  $t$  is the number of points of  $F$  not in  $S$ . Each such point has degree at least  $r$ , and thus  $n \geq \frac{1}{2}rt$ , which implies

$$m - n \leq \frac{1}{2}(t - 2)(2 - r) + 1.$$

If  $t \geq 5$  this implies  $m - n \leq 2 - r$  as required, since  $m$  and  $n$  are integers and  $r \geq 3$ . Since  $F$  has no loops, it is impossible that  $t$  is 1, which leaves  $t = 2, 3$  and 4. As there are at most  $\frac{1}{2}t(t - 1)$  lines between the points of  $F$  not in  $S$ , it follows that  $n \geq tr - \frac{1}{2}t(t - 1)$ , and hence

$$m - n \leq (t - 1)(\frac{1}{2}t + 1 - r).$$

For  $2 \leq t \leq 4$ , this implies  $m - n \leq 2 - r$  in all cases except when  $t$  is 4 and  $r$  is 3, which is only a problem when  $m$  and  $n$  are both 6. In this case, the graph  $F$  must consist of a copy of  $K_4$  together with the two isolated points in  $S$ . However, this is impossible because of the special condition originally imposed on  $S$  when  $G$  has a component isomorphic to  $K_4$ . The proof is complete.

Theorem 1 implies the result foreshadowed in [6], that almost all labelled cubic graphs are 3-connected. In fact, this can be generalised as follows.

**COROLLARY 1.1.** *For fixed  $r \geq 3$ , almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs are  $r$ -connected.*

Equation (1.1) therefore provides a valid asymptotic formula for the number of labelled  $r$ -connected  $r$ -regular graphs on  $p$  points, for  $r \geq 3$ .

The situation is different for  $r = 1$  and 2, when almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs are in fact disconnected. This is immediate for 1-regular graphs, since all such graphs with more than two points are disconnected. On the other hand, the only connected 2-regular graph on  $p$  points is the  $p$ -cycle, which is 2-connected and can be labelled in  $p!/(2p)$  ways. By (1.1) and Stirling's formula, it follows that the proportion of labelled 2-regular



graphs on  $p$  points which are connected (or 2-connected) is asymptotic to  $\frac{1}{2}e^{3/4}(\pi/p)^{1/2}$ .

Since  $O(\ )$  in Theorem 1 is dependent only upon  $R$ , we can sum over any number of sequences  $D$ . In the following example, all permissible sequences  $D$  are taken into account.

**COROLLARY 1.2.** *Let  $T(p, R)$  be the set of labelled graphs on  $p$  points with degrees in the range  $3, \dots, R$ , and let  $\tau(p, R)$  be the proportion of graphs  $G$  in  $T(p, R)$  for which the connectivity of  $G$  is equal to the minimum degree of its points.*

*Then*

$$\tau(p, R) \sim 1$$

*as  $p$  approaches infinity with  $R$  fixed.*

The following problem is suggested by Theorem 1.

**PROBLEM.** What conditions on a function  $f(p)$  are necessary and sufficient for  $R = f(p)$  to imply that the proportion of graphs in  $L(D)$  which are  $r$ -connected approaches 1 as  $p \rightarrow \infty$ ?

From Theorem 1, it is sufficient if  $f(p)$  is bounded above by a constant, but this is almost certainly not necessary. In the other direction, it is easy to show that  $f(p) \leq p - 1$  is not sufficient. Indeed, sometimes the set  $L(D)$  consists of the labelled versions of a unique labelled graph, which is moreover not  $r$ -connected. This was suggested to the author by P. Erdős as being a strong possibility. An example is provided, for all even  $p \geq 6$ , by the graph with two points of degree  $p - 1$  and the rest of degree 3. The points of large degree comprise a 2-point-cutset. Substantial improvements on these results are beyond the scope of our present methods.

The proof of Theorem 1 can be modified so as to obtain stronger bounds on the numbers of graphs in  $L(D)$  which are not  $k$ -connected, for  $k < r$ . In case  $k$  is 1 and attention is restricted to  $r$ -regular graphs, the theory developed by Wright [8] can be applied to find an asymptotic expansion for these numbers.

### 3. CYCLICALLY $k$ -CONNECTED $r$ -REGULAR GRAPHS

The Lemma can be applied to the asymptotic enumeration of labelled locally restricted graphs which are cyclically  $k$ -connected or cyclically  $k$ -point-connected. Results are most readily obtained when the graphs are

regular, and we restrict our attention to this case. Indeed, many authors consider the concept of cyclic  $k$ -connectedness only in connection with cubic graphs and  $k = 4$  (for example, see [2, Chap. 7; 5]).

**THEOREM 2.** *For any fixed  $r \geq 3$  and  $k > 0$ , the numbers of labelled  $r$ -regular graphs on  $p$  points which are*

- (i) *cyclically  $k$ -point-connected,*
- (ii) *cyclically  $k$ -connected,*
- (iii) *of girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$*

*are asymptotically equal as  $p$  approaches infinity, where  $p$  is even if  $r$  is odd.*

*Proof.* Firstly, it can be seen that all cyclically  $k$ -point-connected  $r$ -regular graphs with a sufficiently large number of points are cyclically  $k$ -connected.

Secondly, if an  $r$ -regular graph  $G$  has a cycle  $C$  of length  $i < \lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$ , the set  $S$  of lines joining points in  $C$  to points not in  $C$  has cardinality less than  $k$ . The removal of all lines in  $S$  from  $G$  produces a graph  $H$ , one of whose components is  $C$ . The rest of  $H$  must contain a cycle whenever  $H$  has at least  $2i$  points. Hence, when  $p$  is sufficiently large, every cyclically  $k$ -connected  $r$ -regular graph on  $p$  points has girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$ .

The theorem is established by showing, thirdly, that almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs with girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$  are cyclically  $k$ -point-connected. For our purposes here, the notation  $O(\ )$  denotes a bound depending only on  $r$  and  $k$ .

Suppose  $G$  is an  $r$ -regular graph on  $p$  points with girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$  which is cyclically  $j$ -point-connected but not cyclically  $(j+1)$ -point-connected, for some  $0 \leq j < k$ . Clearly  $G$  cannot be  $(j+1)$ -connected. Thus, if  $j < r$ , Theorem 1 implies that the number of labelled possibilities for  $G$  is  $\rho(r, p)p^{-1}O(1)$ , as  $v(D)$  is  $\rho(r, p)$  in this case. On the other hand, if  $j \geq r$ , form the graph  $G^*$  by rooting  $G$  at a cycle-separating  $j$ -point-cutset  $S$ . Let  $F'$  be a cycle-containing component of  $G^* - S$  for which the total number of lines in  $F'$  or joining  $F'$  with  $S$  is minimised, and is hence at most  $\frac{1}{2}rp$ . Define  $F$ ,  $m$  and  $n$  as for the Lemma in Section 2. The conditions of the Lemma are now satisfied, with  $g(r) = p$  and  $g(i) = 0$  for all other  $i$ . It will shortly be shown that  $m$  is always less than  $n$  in the present situation. By an application of the Lemma as in the proof of Theorem 1, it follows that the total number of labelled possibilities for  $G^*$ , for all possible  $m$  and  $n$  with a given  $p$ , is  $v(D)p^{-1}O(1) = \rho(r, p)p^{-1}O(1)$ .

The number of labelled possibilities for  $G$  is hence  $\rho(r, p)p^{-1}O(1)$  for each possible  $j$ . As  $k$  is fixed, we can sum for  $0 \leq j < k$ , so that the number of labelled  $r$ -regular graphs with girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$  which are *not* cyclically  $k$ -point-connected is  $\rho(r, p)p^{-1}O(1)$ . In view of the asymptotic

formula (1.3), this implies that almost all labelled  $r$ -regular graphs with girth at least  $\lceil k/(r-2) \rceil$  are cyclically  $k$ -point-connected, as required.

It only remains to show  $m < n$ . Since  $G$  is cyclically  $j$ -point-connected and  $S$  is cycle-separating, each point of  $S$  must be adjacent to some point of the graph  $F'$ , which contains some cycle  $C$ . Hence,  $F$  is connected and contains the cycle  $C$ . Consequently  $m \leq n$ , and  $m = n$  only if  $F$  is unicyclic. In the latter case, each of the  $j$  points in  $S$  must be an endpoint in  $F$ , and thus the number of lines in  $F$  is  $\frac{1}{2}(tr + j)$ , where  $t$  denotes the number of points in  $F'$ . We now have

$$j + t = m = n = \frac{1}{2}(tr + j)$$

and therefore

$$t = j/(r-2) < \lceil (j+1)/(r-2) \rceil.$$

But the cycle  $C$  can have length at most  $t$ , contradicting the hypothesised girth of  $G$ . Thus  $m < n$  and the proof is complete.

Theorem 2 provides an asymptotic formula for the number of labelled cyclically  $k$ -connected (or  $k$ -point-connected)  $r$ -regular graphs via (1.3). The first interesting application is the following.

**COROLLARY 2.1.** *The number of labelled cyclically 4-connected cubic graphs on  $2n$  points is asymptotic to*

$$(6n)! \exp(-10/3)/((3n)! 288^n)$$

*as  $n$  approaches infinity. Hence, the proportion of labelled cubic graphs on  $2n$  points which are cyclically 4-connected is asymptotic to  $\exp(-4/3)$  as  $n$  approaches infinity.*

A recurrence relation satisfied by the exact numbers of labelled cyclically 4-connected cubic graphs will be derived elsewhere.

Finally, in view of the results given in [7] regarding the asymptotic numbers of labelled pseudographs, the methods of the present paper can presumably be extended to handle loops and multiple lines.

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